

This section is provided as a reference for project managers, Real Estate Division and others who are responsible for reviewing leases. These include other nonfederal government agencies, nonprofit groups and commercial vendors who are operating facilities on Corps projects.

Because Corps projects are public lands, the Corps should monitor maintenance, visual and aesthetic content to assure that the intended design is kept at a high standard of quality.

When signs are placed on Corps projects by lessees, they should be placed in a way that conforms to the visual uniformity and communicative intent of the Corps Sign Standards program.

These guidelines are intended for both commercial, for-profit leases as well as public, nonprofit leases. Regardless of the type of agreement (cost share, leased concession or for other outgranted lands), the goal is to foster placement of signs on leased property that communicate effectively, are appropriate to the natural setting and are well-made and maintained.

These guidelines are not intended to place undue hardship on lessees, either commercial, nonprofit or other nonfederal government agency.

At the same time, it is recognized that the Corps does not have the resources to ensure that signs on leased premises will conform in all respects to the sign standards for Corps controlled land.

Accordingly, the following sections are intended as guidelines for plan review purposes rather than as absolute standards.

Types of Facilities

The various types of facilities where signs may appear include, but are not limited to:

Public/Nonprofit Facilities

- State parks
- County parks
- Municipal parks
- Federal lands and parks
- Wildlife management areas
- Conservation areas
- Historical sites

Semiprivate/Nonprofit Facilities

- Private campgrounds (church, YMCA, scouts, etc.)
- Organized sports (Little League, soccer clubs, etc.)

Commercial Areas and Concessions

- Restaurant
- Grocery store
- Gas station
- Tackle shop
- Sporting goods
- Marina
- Boat docks
- Marine services
- Guide services

Commercial Recreation Facilities

- Trailer parks
- Commercial campgrounds
- Amusement parks
- Winter sports facilities
- Rental cabins
- Lodges

Other

- Utility company facilities

All identification and directional signs placed at a leased site should be of a common design. Each sign should have a single purpose, with legend easily legible, colors consistent and placed within the viewers' cone-of-vision. They should be well-constructed and properly maintained.

The general intent is to maintain visual uniformity, prohibit commercial clutter, encourage a high level of safety awareness and quality signage that respects the surrounding environment and project setting. This is primarily accomplished by curtailing the use of commercialized advance directional signs, identifying commercial facilities in a generic manner, using natural materials and colors that are complementary to the setting and discouraging brilliant illumination of signs at night.

We also recognize the existence of words, names, symbols or designs that are used by the lessees and are recognized as logos or as marks: trademarks, service marks, certification marks or collective marks. Lessees may also participate in franchises or chains which require certain "trade dress" or business images. The display of these marks is limited to identification or directional signs which identify the facility with adopted trademarks. Additional display of logos, posters or panels that advertise specific food, drink, recreation and vehicle products that are available at the aforementioned facility shall not be displayed on signs. It is important to note that this section deals with signs only. Any other use of these marks is covered by the outgrant document.

In this section, general applications and guidelines are described by type of facility.

Roadway Signs

All roadway signs will conform to applicable federal standards (Section 9).

Outgrant or Concession Sign Plan

Prior to placement of any signs on leased property, the lessee must submit a complete sign plan for the proposed site as part of the overall development plan. This will be an attachment to the lease instrument. The sign plan for leased areas is not intended to place an undue hardship on lessees and does not have to have the same level of detail as that prepared by the Corps for its own areas.

The sign plan should follow the guidance provided in Section 3 and show the placement locations on site plans with attached documentation that describes: legend content, graphic formats, size, material fabrication, construction details, and a schedule showing how and when the signs will be maintained.

Although the look of the signs may differ from the prescribed Corps format, the general sign type classifications and viewing standards should be similar to the basic principles and guidelines described in Section 2. All signs should have a single purpose: to identify, to direct, to inform, or to warn. They should not be overly wordy, should be sized appropriately for the surrounding landscape and should be placed for easy viewing.

The primary function of developing and maintaining a sign plan is to encourage the lessee to design, plan and implement an entire sign program, instead of placing an amalgam of different signs on a one-at-a-time basis. The sign plan, like all preconstruction submittals, should be thorough enough to provide the Corps reviewer with the information needed to evaluate the plan effectively.

Lease Agreement

All new leases or renewals to existing leases must include a sign plan as part of the initial development plan and a schedule for implementation.

New Lease

The guidelines included in this section will be furnished to prospective lessees together with other lease requirements so they will have thorough knowledge of the requirements.

Existing Lease

Upon renewal of the lease agreement, signs at existing leased sites, facilities or projects must be in compliance with these guidelines.

General Guidelines for Review and Approval of Sign Plans

Because there are many different types of lease and cost share agreements possible, it is difficult to prescribe specific guidelines for all locations or applications. There are, however, some common sense principles that apply; most notably, "less is more." Signage that is generic in character and appropriately

sized will generally be just as effective in attracting the viewer as are signs that are large and highly commercial. Tastefully designed and well-executed signage at a concession that appears to be professionally managed will help maintain the quality of the area and attract customers.

Whether signs are to be located inside a self-contained commercial facility or on an established roadway, consideration for the aesthetic and safety features should be given to each sign proposal. Regardless of conditions off the project, signs on Corps projects should set high standards for design quality and respect for the visual environment.

Corps Management with Charge-Back

Some projects have developed charge-back mechanisms whereby the Corps installs and maintains all signs at a lessee's installation, either public or commercial; the lessee is then charged back for the cost of the signs, including administration fees and ongoing maintenance service as required.

This method helps to maintain the integrity of the Corps Sign Standards throughout the project. If these signs are purchased from established Corps suppliers, the cost to the lessee will be competitive with signs of equal quality purchased from local suppliers. The main advantage is that should the lease agreement be terminated, the Corps or new lessee will not be required to completely resign the facility prior to taking over responsibility for management.

Conclusion

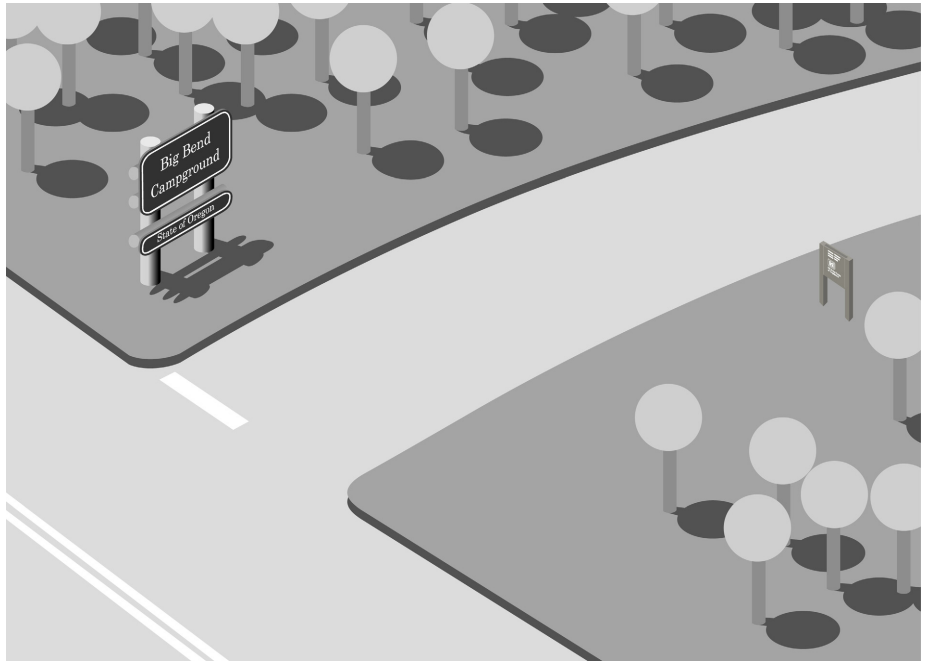
Signage to be placed on leased areas should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and installations monitored to determine that design intent is met.

Questions or problems that arise in the process of implementing this guideline should be directed to the district Sign Program Manager.

Suggested Sign Criteria and Design Guidelines

Suggested guidelines for signing the three basic types of facilities or areas under outgrant or commercial lease agreements are described in the following section.

This example shows the identification of a state operated campground with the Corps Participation Credit sign placed along the entry road into the facility.



This section includes state, county, municipal parks, wildlife management and conservation areas, and historical sites that are on Corps land and open to the public, but leased out to and managed by a nonfederal public government body.

Project Identification and the Use of Standard Agency Signs

Agencies without their own sign standards may use the Corps Sign Standards or another system. The proposed signs should meet the general visual requirements for sign format, legend consistency, visual acuity, and color as described in Principles and Guidelines,

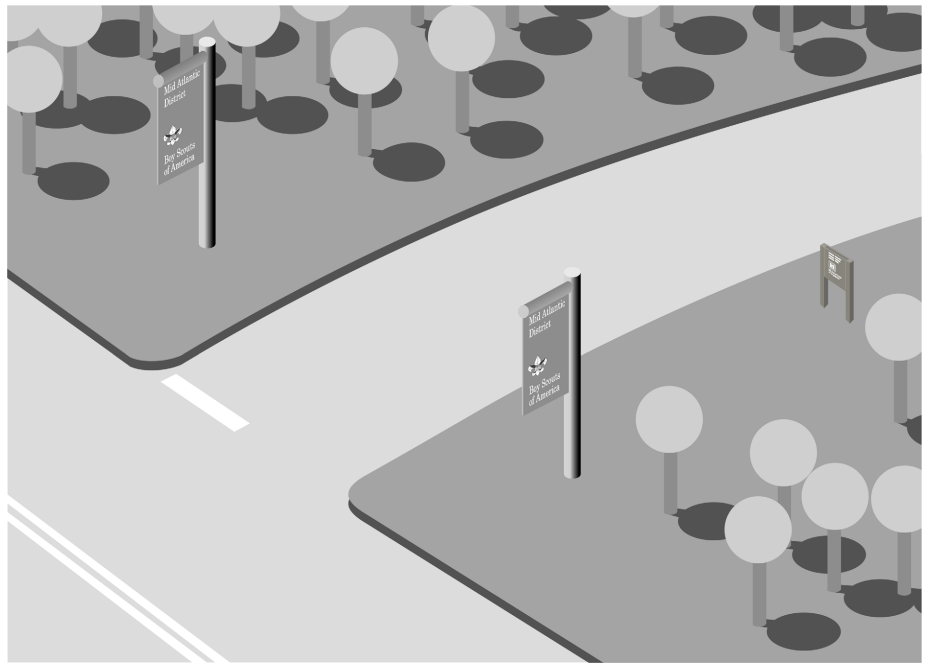
Section 2 of this manual. The signs should be visually appropriate to the site, well-crafted, and made of durable materials. Signage should be visually consistent throughout the leased areas. Refer to Section 5 for appropriate identification signs.

Roadway Directional Signs

All directional signs on project lands outside leased areas will be made part of the overall Corps project sign plan. Cost sharing and implementation of directional signs with lessees will be made part of the lease agreement on a site-by-site basis and are the Corps responsibility.

On Approach and Project Roadway Directional signs, facilities will be identified generically. For placement guidelines, refer to page 2-6 and Section 6.

This illustration shows a formal entry portal identifying a large Boy Scout Camp with the Corps Participation Credit sign placed along the entry road for viewing once drivers enter the facility.



This includes campgrounds and recreation facilities leased to churches, YMCA's, Boy Scouts, Little Leagues and other nonprofit groups for their program activities.

These types of facilities will generally require minimal signage because of limited access by the general public. Where appropriate, the Corps Sign Standards may be adopted.

Project Identification Signs

If a lessee or cooperating sponsor elects to use a facility identification sign of their own design, the overall size, material and mounting methods should be similar in character to Corps Sign Standards. A Corps Participating Credit sign as shown on pages 5-18 and 5-19 shall be placed on the adjacent entry road.

If the Corps Standard Identification sign is used to identify this location, the format should follow the guidelines described in Section 5, page 5-2, example (c). This specifies that the facility shall be identified on the primary legend. The cooperative sponsor and its relationship to the project will be identified on the secondary legend. Another option is to use the Corps Identification Sign with Partner Logo(s) in Section 5, which displays both the Corps and the partner's logo.

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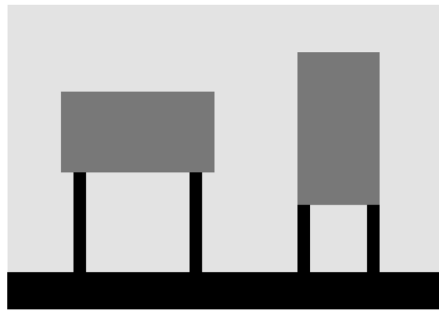
This section summarizes the signage principles for leased commercial areas such as marinas and commercial campgrounds, as well as for concessions within a Corps recreation area including: tackle shops, snack bars, and marine services. Commercial concessionaires will be responsible for their own sign installation. The basic principles as described in Section 2 of this manual should be followed, but the signs should be of their own design.

Individual concessions within a Corps managed location such as a tackle shop or snack bar that adjoins a multipurpose recreation site should be identified generically and may use Corps Sign Standards for all applicable ancillary signs. These include parking and no parking, traffic, safety and symbol signs and incorporate all mounting and material specifications as shown in the manual. All directional signs on project lands outside the leased areas will be made part of the overall Corps project sign plan; cost sharing and implementation of directional signs with lessees will be made part of the lease agreement on a site-by-site basis and are the Corps responsibility.

Commercial Identification Sign Standards

Identification of any commercial installation within a Corps project should be made in direct proximity to the facility as a ground-mounted sign adjacent to the entranceway or structure. Ideally, these signs are placed on double-face sign panels mounted perpendicular to the sight-lines of approaching viewers.

Main identification signs should be designed and sized to meet the objective of providing adequate information to the public with the least possible disturbance of the environment along the road and with no interference with highway safety and operation. The sign should be of a simple design that is appropriate to the environment. Basic guidelines for size and placement of signs at a commercial facility on a Corps project are described below (for service stations see the special guidelines provided in this section).



Interior Project Roads

Maximum 24 square feet per side and not exceeding 8 feet in one dimension: each face should be the same size and shape.

Two Lane Roads with Posted Speed Limit

35 mph or greater: maximum 32 square feet per side and not exceeding 8 feet in one dimension; each face shall be the same size and shape.

Four Lane Roads and Highways

Maximum 48 square feet per side and not exceeding 10 feet in one dimension; each face shall be the same size and shape.

Location

Main entrance signs are generally placed perpendicular to the approaching viewer and immediately adjacent to the entry to the facility. If the sign is located within a roadside zone, it must not create a visual hazard which will interfere with safety, visibility or operation of highway or entrance road. Any sign located within the public right of way will require approval from the government jurisdiction responsible.

Within a leased area, signs may be attached to buildings but ground-mounted signs in the front of the facility are preferred.

All main entrance signs are to be permanently affixed. No trailer-mounted or removable signs are allowed.

Top of Signs

Signs should generally be mounted low to the ground, with a recommended height to base above grade level to be between 36"-54". Top of signs should not exceed 14 feet unless prevailing snow conditions require that the sign be mounted higher.

Wording

Information is confined to the name and type of business, special service or facility. Lessees are not to post any signs that include logotypes or advertising of commercial products such as soft drinks, cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, sports equipment, etc.

Lettering

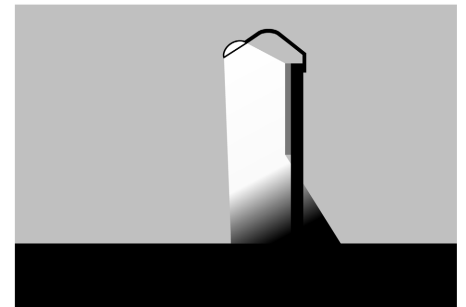
See recommended legend size chart on page 2-6.

Color

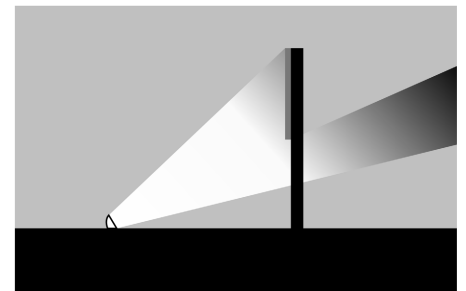
Panels should be appropriate to the environment; providing adequate visibility without garishness. Suggested options include weathered redwood or cedar sign panels or enamels in muted colors or natural earth tones with lettering of sufficient contrast for good legibility.

Lighting

Internally illuminated signs are discouraged. Retroreflective letters are permitted. Externally illuminated or indirect lighting is permitted when adequate visibility cannot be obtained by use of retroreflective letters or background. If possible, the light source should be concealed.



Lamps mounted on mast-arms create a cluttered looking sign assembly. It's also difficult to control over glow and glare from this type of lighting assembly.



The preferred method for lighting a sign panel is using concealed ground-mounted fixtures. This provides enough light without glare or over glow.

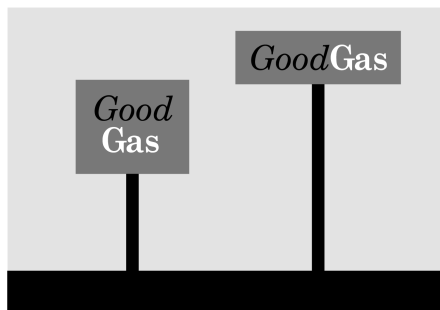
Signage for service stations and marine gas docks will be governed by the following special standards.

Identification

The Corps may authorize the placement of one double-face company sign, mounted perpendicular to approaching traffic, within the service area. Where it is desirable from a public service standpoint, the gasoline brand name information or trademark may be displayed, but is limited to one sign as part of the identification. It is intended that the signs will be the usual type of brand symbol furnished by the oil companies. They may be indirectly lighted or internally illuminated. Gasoline pumps may be painted the usual company colors and may have the usual company markings.

Size and Mounting

The size of oil company brand name identification signs will be no larger than 21 square feet per side. Double-face signs are permitted. Ground-mounted signs with a 36-54" height above grade level are preferable. Top of pole mounted signs shall not exceed 10 feet above grade unless terrain and/or vegetation requires that the sign be mounted higher.



Lighting

Flashing or neon lights will not be permitted. Floodlights used for illuminating nighttime service areas must have a concealed light source to prevent overglow beyond the designated area and to keep from blinding approaching drivers or boaters.

Roadway Directional Signs

All directional signs on project lands outside leased areas will be made part of the overall Corps project sign plan. Cost sharing and implementation of directional signs with lessees will be made part of the lease agreement on a site-by-site basis and are the Corps responsibility.

On Approach and Project Roadway Directional signs, facilities will be identified generically. For placement guidelines, refer to page 2-6 and Section 6.

Multiple Facilities at One Location

A difficult signing problem develops where more than one private concession is entered at a single approach. To reduce pressures for the "Venetian Blind" type of resort signs, the Corps should place approach roadway directionals near the entranceway giving motorists adequate information so that each individual concessionaire does not feel it necessary to make an individual statement at these locations.

